(iii) Sale of company's non producing assests namely excess plant and machinery, building, land etc.

Lifting of ban on asbestos mining

839. SHRIMATI BIMBA RAIKAR: Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether mining of asbestos is banned presently in India on health grounds;

(b) if so, whether Government are aware that some countries have lifted the ban on asbestos mining after research reports established that asbestos did not affect the health of miners;

(c) if so, whether the lease holders of asbestos mines in Rajasthan have sought lifting of the ban on asbestos mining; and

(d) if so, the Centre's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF MINES (SHRI RAMESH BAIS): (a) Grant of fresh mining leases and renewal of existing mining leases for asbestos are presently banned in India on health grounds.

(b) No, the Central Government are not aware of some countries having lifted ban on asbestos mining.

(c) and (d) Asbestos mines owners of Rajasthan and Andhra Pradesh have represented before the Central Government to allow grant of fresh/ renewal of asbestos mining leases in the country. Government have not lifted ban on grant of fresh/renewal of mining leases for asbestos in the country.

Manganese ore reserves in Orissa

840. SHRI SURENDRA LATH: Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

(a) what are the various manganese ore reserve areas in Orissa;

(b) whether the manganese ore procured from those areas are exported;

(c) if so, the annual procurement and export of mangenese from those areas during the last three years; and

(d) the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF MINES (SHRI RAMESH BAIS): (a) As per the information available with Indian Bureau of Mines (IBM), a subordinate office under Ministry of Mines, the district-wise recoverable reserves of manganese ore as on 1.4.2000 for the State of Orissa are as follow.

Recoverable Reserves on Manganese Ore as on 1.4.2000

(Unit:- 1000 tonnes)

State/District	Quantity
Orissa	70636.43
Bolangir district	1069.00
Keonjhar district	47141.44
Koraput district	1038.67
Sambalpur district	60.00
Sundergarh district	21327.32

(b) to (d) Export of minerals take place as per market opportunities and within the parameters prescribed in the Export Import Policy. However, information of State-wise export of minerals, including for manganese, is not centrally maintained.

Illegal mining of chromium in Orissa

841. SHRI SURENDRA LATH: Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the illegal chromium mining in Orissa;

(b) if so, the number of incidents which have come to the notice of the Central Government during the last three years;